

15 July 1999

Food and Drug Administration,
Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061,
Rockville, MD 20852.

5132 '99 JUL 20 P12:09

Regarding: Docket #98N-1038 "Irradiation in the production, processing and handling of food."


I'm troubled by the idea that I could unknowingly purchase irradiated food. I'm further troubled that the FDA could consider this labeling issue based on so little data. As a research scientist, my working hours are spent 'honoring' the scientific method: repeatable controlled scientific studies. I also rely on the counsel of unbiased experts in interpreting data and drawing valid conclusions based on my work. Further, working for a Biotech firm that works with the FDA to release only safe and effective biologics for use around the world, I am puzzled that the same scrutiny is not being applied to the issue of the labeling of irradiated food. Whether one chooses to expose themselves to the unknowns associated with this new technology, clearly, appropriate labeling is paramount.

Why is it I can't buy a bottle of water without prominent and descriptive content labeling but you are proposing that I as well as the uninformed consumer might soon be purchasing and consuming, without the right of choice, irradiated food that is not clearly labeled as irradiated. Labeling should be clearly visible and straightforward with the use of the terms "irradiation" or "irradiated" and the radura symbol. The proposed alternative terms such as "cold pasteurization" and "electronic pasteurization" are misleading and should not be used.

Thanks to the FDA, food is clearly labeled as to content and those efforts have been applauded by many such as myself, who would like to know what they're consuming. I am asking that you apply similar standards with regards to food irradiation labeling.

I know you have a large task in front of you and I thank you for taking the time to read this letter and consider it's content and merit.

Sincerely

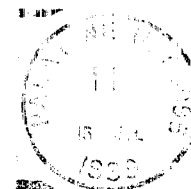


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